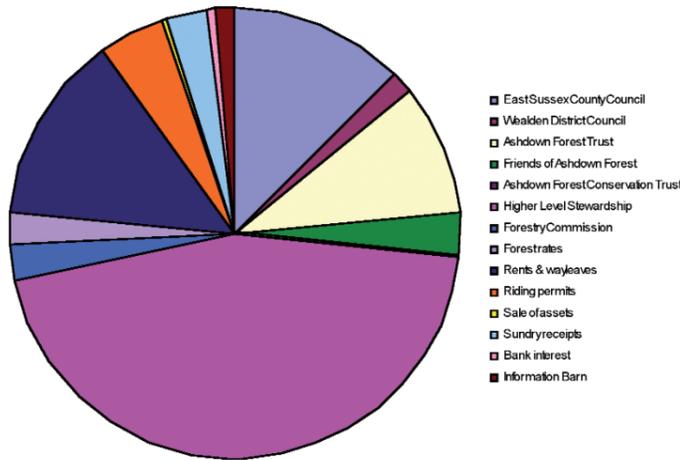


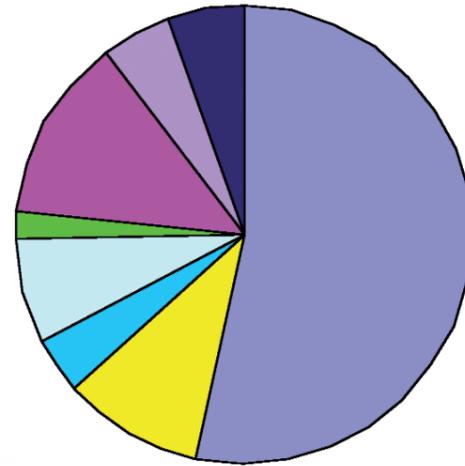
Appendix 1. Charts illustrating income and expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2009; based on examined, unaudited accounts, as approved by the Board on 8 June 2009. Chart segments follow the order of the items in the adjacent columns (starting at '12.00 o'clock').

Income 2008 - 2009. Total: £703,240



- East Sussex County Council
- Wealden District Council
- Ashdown Forest Trust
- Friends of Ashdown Forest
- Ashdown Forest Conservation Trust
- Higher Level Stewardship
- Forestry Commission
- Forestrates
- Rents & wayleaves
- Riding permits
- Sale of assets
- Sundry receipts
- Bank interest
- Information Barn

Expenditure 2008 - 2009. Total: £664,885



- Salaries
- Administration
- Information Barn & visitor management
- Transport & machinery, Forest maintenance & staff costs
- Woodland management
- Heathland conservation (excluding staff salaries)
- Capital (machinery & equipment purchased)
- Input VAT disallowed

Appendix 2. Membership of the Board of Conservators in 2008-2009, and by whom elected or appointed (ESCC, East Sussex County Council; WDC, Wealden District Council).

Cllr John Barnes (Chairman)	ESCC	Cllr Tony Reid	ESCC
Michael Cooper	ESCC	Cllr Ros St Pierre	ESCC
Roy Galley	Commoners	Cllr Stephen Shing	ESCC
Leslie Gillham	Commoners	John Spicer	Commoners
Philip Glyn	Commoners	Edward Stenhouse	Commoners
Cllr Michael Hoy	WDC	Cllr Richard Stogdon	ESCC
Cllr Bob Lacey	Ashdown Forest Trust	Rupert Thornley-Taylor	ESCC
Cllr Sylvia Martin	WDC	Cllr Francis Whetstone	ESCC

Appendix 3. Staff of the Forest.

Clerk to the Conservators	Hew Prendergast	Rangers	Rich Allum, Roger Beal, Chris Sutton, Michael Yates
Office Manager	Ros Marriott	Tractor Driver/Mechanic	Colin Lutman
Office Assistant	Tracy Buxton	Countryside Workers	Michael Payne, Ivan Playford (until July), Edward Burgin (from Sept.)
Conservation Officer	Chris Marrable	Cleaner/Caretaker (p/t)	Max Payton
Shepherd	Louise Amos	Litter Warden (p/t)	Max Payton
Assistant Shepherd	Veronica Wilson (until Oct.) Philip Kidd (from Oct.)		

Appendix 4. Forest bibliography 2008-2009.

Amos, L. 2008. Close-shepherding on Ashdown Forest. *Conservation Land Management* 6: 12-13.
 Butler, C. 2008. *An archaeological survey of Ashdown Forest, East Sussex*. Chris Butler Archaeological Services for the Conservators of Ashdown Forest.
 Capita Symonds. 2009. *Assessment of the ponds at Chelwood Vachery*. Report to the Conservators by Capita Symonds, East Grinstead.
 Mobbs, T. 2009. *Natural England shepherded grazing at Ashdown Forest workshop*. 26 March 2009. Held at and facilitated by the Defra Innovation Centre, Reading.
 Tesserae Environmental Consultants. 2008. *Habitats Regulations Assessment*. Scoping report for Mid Sussex District Council. Core Strategy Pre-submission Document.
 Wright, A. (Comp.). 2008. *Wealden ancient tree project*. 2007-2008. Wealden Ancient Tree Project.

Foreword

John Barnes, Chairman of the Board

It has been a year of change on many fronts on the Forest: more lambs to the Hebridean flock, heathland restoration on tens of hectares, discovery of hundreds of archaeological sites, progress on upgrading the Vachery Forest Garden, the most detailed survey yet of visitors, and the first meetings with representatives of the local parishes, to name but a few. All these are welcome. At the same time we must uphold the bye-laws, maintain roadside trees, clear up litter and fly-tipping, and help to deal with the effects of the expanding deer population. Working with others, especially our band of dedicated volunteers, is critical.

The 'wildness' of the Forest is something I hear a lot about, as well as its openness and the

wonderful views over the heaths to north and south. These features are neither natural nor permanent so it is part of our challenge to make them seem so! As a bird-watcher I know that the Dartford warbler and the nightjar will not stay forever unless we take an active role in managing the landscape – hence the sheep flock, the mowing of bracken, the control of trees and scrub. The same management also preserves those sights that we used to take for granted over a much wider area of countryside – the cuckoo and the skylark, both in



A view northwards over Broadstone Heath from near the Forest Centre (Hew Prendergast).

decline at national level, are happily still to be seen in abundance on the Forest.

Long may that be so.

John Barnes

Conservation

Heathland

This was the second full year of funding from Defra's Higher Level Stewardship (HLS) scheme for the restoration of the Forest's 1500 hectares of nationally and internationally important heathland.

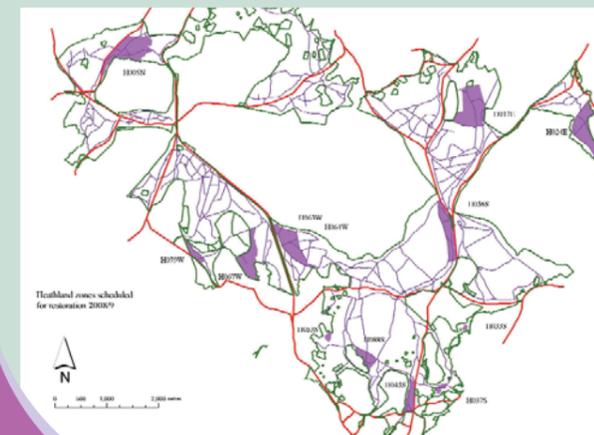


Fig. 1. Map of the Forest used to highlight heathland areas due for restoration work in the winter of 2008/2009.

It supported further concerted effort to clear or thin invasive scrub and trees from many areas (Figs 1, 4), work that takes place in the winter months. Over the summer, the Close Shepherded Grazing Feasibility Project built up the Hebridean flock to 150 animals. Grazing (Fig. 2) on the heaths took place on 55 days and limited but systematic observations showed that the sheep were having the desired impact on vegetation (Fig. 3). Public events, media coverage and direct contact with Forest visitors raised the profile of the Project such that local public support is now overwhelmingly strong. Nationwide too the Project is attracting considerable interest from heathland



Fig. 2. Shepherd's view of one dog (Harry) and the sheep in Wrens Warren, October (Louise Amos).

managers. All the while staff continued to gain experience in more technical details of livestock management and the infrastructure needed to support the Project grew with the offer of several sites of in-bye land (for over-nighting or – wintering animals). The offer of land at the National Cat Centre, Chelwood Gate was particularly significant as it was later to prove perfect for lambing.



Fig. 3. One of the Hebrideans browsing birch, June (Veronica Wilson). Birch is one of the most invasive plants of heaths.

Woodland

While the Forest's heaths attract (deservedly) most attention from visitors and conservation organisations, there are also 1000 hectares of woodland, covering 40% of the Forest area. Although most of the woodland, and its individual trees, date from post WWII, the Wealden Ancient Tree Project, published in the year, nonetheless identified 47 'ancient, veteran or notable' trees on the Forest. With support from the Forestry Commission (FC), a new management plan for the woodland was written. One immediate effect was that Commoners and wood permit holders were allocated woodland areas to collect wood rather than on the edges of heaths as in previous years; an unprecedented number, 127, were involved (see Fig. 4). The FC-funded clearance of rhododendron continued into its fifth year.



Fig. 4. A contractor gathers birch cleared from a small heath by the Beaconsfield Road, Chelwood Gate. The logs were piled up for later collection by Commoners (Rich Allum).



Fig. 5. An engineer from Capita Symonds measures one of the weirs in the Chelwood Vachery Forest Garden (Capita Symonds).

Heritage

Although the Forest has several Scheduled Ancient Monuments, no comprehensive archaeological survey had been done until the advent of HLS. On its completion in 2008, it had raised the number of known sites from 75 to 498, ranging in date from the Bronze Age to WWII. As well as offering plenty of scope for further research, the discovery and documentation of such sites mean that management

operations can be adjusted to prevent unwitting damage.

In the Chelwood Vachery Forest Garden, employees of East Grinstead-based company Capita Symonds did a condition assessment of the ca 100 year-old dams and weirs as part of a corporate training day (Fig. 5), and contractors (funded by private sponsorship) dredged the upper two of the four lakes. Volunteers spent over 240 hours restoring the Garden to some semblance of its former glory, largely through clearing rhododendron.

Finance & Resources

Finance Report

Compared with 2007-2008, the Board's operating income fell from £739k to £703k (Appendix 1). The greatest single source was again Defra's HLS grant of £315k (45% of total income); grants from local authorities (ESCC, WDC) and the Ashdown Forest Trust totalled £165k (23%). No sponsored memorial seats were installed in the year (the most popular venues having been filled), leading to a fall in income of £15k while other notable falls were of £9.9k from the Forestry Commission (FC) and £2.5k from ESCC. The Society of Friends of Ashdown Forest supported the Board with the purchase of a new 4x4 vehicle and a networked photocopier.

Operating expenditure also decreased, from £733k to £664k. The major contributors to this change were the completion of the stakeholder engagement process (£320 compared with £23k in 2007-2008), the fall in expenditure on rhododendron clearance (matching the fall in FC income above), and, since set up costs had been incurred in the previous year, £11k less on the grazing project. Although the year ended with a surplus of £38k, most of this was for the deferred purchase of a

capital item. The total reserves balance on 31 March 2009 was £233k, up from £195k in 2007-2008.

Governance

A major step for the Board during the year was its signing off in June of the **Forest Strategic Plan 2008-2016**. The start date allowed assessment and incorporation of feed-back from stakeholder meetings in the previous year while the end-date coincides with the end of HLS funding. Combined with introductions to the history, landscape and governance of the Forest along with, for example, descriptions of its use by visitors and its main statutory designations, the **Plan** presented a comprehensive way forward across all sectors of the Board's interests and responsibilities. Reviews and revisions were made to the Board's Health and Safety and Freedom of Information Act policies and to its Standing Orders and a start was made on comprehensively reviewing and revising risk assessments for work activities.

Volunteers

The Board is fortunate to have an increasing number of volunteers in a range of supporting roles, especially after successful drives to recruit more for working with the public in the Information Barn and assisting Rangers at weekends. Various organisations also sent volunteers on 'away days', such as Lloyds Bank, the Royal Bank of Scotland (RBS, Fig. 10), Capita Symonds (see Fig. 5), ESCC Social Services and the National Centre for Young People with Epilepsy, and the Sussex Probation Service also started what is hoped to be a long-term collaboration.



Fig. 10. RBS volunteers in Tabell Ghyll taking a break from clearing rhododendron (Mike Yates).



Fig. 11. Volunteers gathering redundant tree shelters from Chelwood Vachery where extensive planting took place post the 1987 hurricane (Hew Prendergast).